

FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

0075000009

Boston N.

719, 720

Town Lexington

Place (neighborhood or village)



Address 684 Lowell St.

Historic Name

Uses: Present Residential

Original Residential

Date of Construction ca. ~~1830~~ 1891

Source Deeds, Valuation lists, former owner

Style/Form ~~Greek Revival with Queen Anne finishes~~
Queen Anne

Architect/Builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation Fieldstone

Wall/Trim Wood Clapboard/Wood Shingle

Roof Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures Attached barn

Major Alterations (with dates)

Queen Anne finishes (1890s)

Rear additions (dates unknown)

N

Condition Fair

Moved ☐ no ☒ yes Date early 20th c. (before 1921)

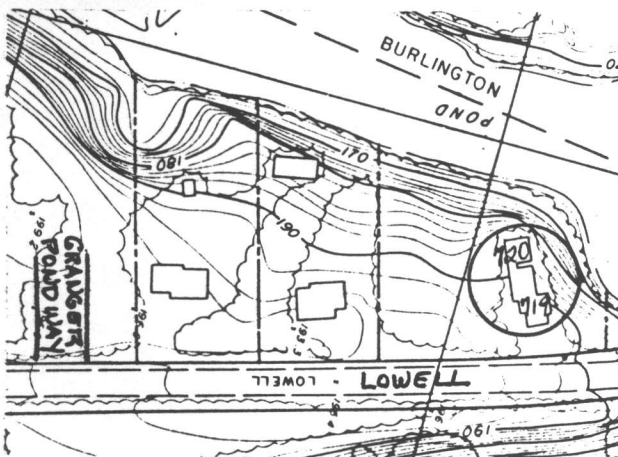
Acreage 1.6 A.

Setting On a wooded lot next to a major street with constant traffic; screened by trees from shopping mall on other side of street and from commercial area immediately north. On a hill above a pond with a large operating gravel pit on the other side.



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Recorded by Nancy S. Seasholes

Organization Lexington Historical Commission

Date (month / year) February 1998, revised Sept. 2001

Follow Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey Manual instructions for completing this form.

BUILDING FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION ☐ see continuation sheet

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

684 Lowell St. (MHC #719) is probably the only Greek Revival cottage with Queen Anne finishes in Lexington. The original house is rectangular, 1½ stories, three-by-two bays, and side-gabled (it has been moved from its original location and is now set with a gable end toward the street) with a small off-center front chimney. It has many additions at the west end: first a 1½-story side-gabled addition with gabled projecting center bay and an off-center ridge chimney, then a shed-roofed extension, and finally a one-story sun room that connects the house with the barn. The house is set on a fieldstone foundation; the original house is clad with wood clapboards and diamond patterned shingles in the gables, the first addition with clapboards and wood shingles; and the entire house is roofed with asphalt shingles. The center entrance in the original house has been replaced by a projecting gabled bay; the main entry is now under a shed roof in the reentrant angle of the first addition. Windows are 2/2 double hung sash. Queen Anne finishes on the original house include the patterned shingles and curved brackets at the corners of the gables. The attached barn (MHC #720) is side-gabled, clad with clapboards and tar paper, and retains the original barn door opening.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE ☐ see continuation sheet

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Although this house appears to be a Queen Anne cottage, deeds and assessors' lists indicate that it actually was built before 1839 and improved in the 1890s. The house was certainly standing in 1839 when it was sold by Stephen Robbins, who had started the fur industry in East Lexington, to Ebenezer Blaisdell, a mill wright from West Cambridge (now Arlington). It is not clear, however, when Robbins had acquired the house or when it was built. For most of the second half of the 19th century the house and its associated 6¾ acres of land were owned by an Alonzo Fogg, who acquired the property in 1845 and sold it in 1888 to Stephen B. Manning of Somerville.

Manning moved to Lexington, built a barn, and acquired some livestock. In 1891 the assessed value of this house, which had been \$500, was raised to \$600 while other houses remained the same, suggesting that some improvements had been made, and in 1894 the value of this house was raised to \$800, suggesting more improvements. It was thus probably at these times that the gabled bay and patterned shingles were added to the original house, for its value then remained constant into the 20th century. Manning was a watch and clock repairman; his shop was in this house, which, at the time he bought it, stood about 100 feet south of its present location facing west toward Butterfield's (Granger's) Pond. Sometime before 1921 when a new dam was being built at the outlet of the pond and the Middlesex Turnpike (Lowell St.) being reconstructed, Manning allowed gravel for the roadbed to be taken from the hill behind his house, which was originally much higher, provided that in return a site be leveled so that he could move the house higher up the hill. This was done and the house was moved to its present location.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES ☐ see continuation sheet

Lexington Valuation Lists. 1887-1903.

Middlesex Registry of Deeds. Deeds. Cambridge, MA. 383: 4; 389: 572; 409: 61; 461: 8; 1836: 399.

Whipple, S. Lawrence. Notes on House at 684 Lowell St. Lex. (Burtch). In possession of S. Lawrence Whipple, Lexington, MA.

Photograph given to present owner by Elizabeth Burtch.

☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*